

## Focus in Honor of Michael T. Bowers, Recipient of the 2004 Award for Distinguished Contribution in Mass Spectrometry



The 2004 ASMS Award for a Distinguished Contribution in Mass Spectrometry was presented to Professor Michael T. Bowers for his fundamental and pioneering contributions to ion-neutral collision theory. The award was formally presented on May 25, 2004 at the 52nd ASMS Conference in Nashville. His wife, Nancy, captured this [photograph](#) of Mike on stage immediately after the presentation of his plenary address. Mike's excellent lecture chronicled not only the development and refinement of collision theory by Mike and his group, but also the growth and evolution of the ASMS Conference since his initial attendance in 1969. Mike has participated in *every* ASMS conference since that time(!), which reflects his enormous commitment to ASMS and mass spectrometry. Moreover, Mike has provided singular service to the scientific community as Associate Editor of the *Journal of the American Chemical Society* and as the Editor of the *International Journal of Mass Spectrometry*. He has been honored by numerous prestigious awards, including the ACS Field and Franklin Award and the Thomson Gold Medal.

Mike's career has been (and continues to be!) prodigious. He has published 333 refereed papers, presented about 500 lectures, mentored 23 undergraduate and 32 graduate students, supervised 36 post-doctoral fellows and senior visitors, and collaborated with more than 50 senior scientists. As a principal investigator, he has

garnered more than \$12M in research support. While the numbers are certainly impressive, it is the quality and breadth of his work, and the character and depth of his interactions that are incomparable. Many mass spectrometrists have benefited from his insightful work, his scientific guidance, and his warm friendship. On a personal note, I am privileged to have Mike as a stimulating colleague and close friend.

The editors of the *Journal of the American Society for Mass Spectrometry* are pleased to dedicate this Special Focus on "Novel Approaches to Peptide and Protein Characterization" to Mike Bowers. As the field of mass spectrometry has evolved from the study of small ions and neutrals to the characterization of large biologically relevant molecules, Mike has remained at the forefront of research. This Focus highlights recent work from Mike's group as well as from eight other leading laboratories, and illustrates the rich diversity of the field.

But first, we present Mike's personal account of his early years. In response to my questions about the beginnings of his love for science, Mike prepared this retrospective that provides a very personal glimpse of his life, and which takes us from a gold star in third grade to the highest honor awarded by ASMS.

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*Associate Editor*

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